POLICY NO 3

General
A child who is at least six years old but not yet seventeen is of compulsory school age, irrespective of distance from the school, and is required to be enrolled at a registered government or non-government school and must attend the school on every day instruction is provided at the school for the child, unless the minister has granted an exemption from school attendance.

(Children under six years of age are not under compulsion, but are required to attend school for the entire day school is open for instruction once enrolled.)

We believe that successful learning is possible through good attendance at school. This success results from the:
- maximum exposure to teaching and learning programs
- minimum disruption and interruption to learning
- formation of good habits, resulting in being a well organised student

We believe that successful students are well organised and punctual. This results in students:
- keeping up with their work
- not having to catch up missed work
- not being different from or isolated from their peers
- developing good habits for life long learning and for the development of essential life skills

We believe that parent/caregiver attitude to regular and punctual attendance is critical in avoiding future truancy. This results in:
- the development of a positive attitude by students to attending school
- the understanding that school is important in student’s future learning and life opportunities

Responsibilities
Parents/caregivers are responsible for getting their children to and from school:
This means that parents/caregivers will:
- endeavour to have children arrive at school between 8:30 and 8.45 am,
- endeavour to have children attend school on every day when instruction is offered unless the school receives a valid reason for being absent (e.g. illness),
- provide the school with an appropriate explanation for the student’s non-attendance. Usually this comprises a note (forms are provided by the school) or telephone call from a parent/caregiver or a medical certificate - after three days a written explanation is required,
- provide a reason for their child’s late arrival at school,
- let the school know if an extended absence is likely or if the teacher needs to arrange work at home for the student,
- strive to encourage children’s participation at school,

To support good attendance parents/caregivers should ensure that their child:
- receives adequate sleep,
- has a balanced healthy diet to assist them to remain in good health.
Students are responsible for attending school and participating in the teaching and learning program:
This means that students will:
* actually get to school after leaving home,
* stay in the school yard once at school, unless permission is given by the parent/caregiver to leave for a legitimate purpose,
* participate in the teaching and learning program to the best of their ability,
* report to the office if they arrive late (after 8:50 am)
* not affect in a negative way the attendance of other students through inappropriate behaviour or attitudes

To support good attendance students should strive to;
* develop organisational skills that result in them dressing themselves, having their school bag packed, having breakfast and completing homework the evening before school,
* maintain a regular healthy diet and sleeping patterns that provide adequate rest.

Teachers are responsible for monitoring student attendance:
This means that teachers will:
* maintain an accurate record of absence and lateness (including time of arrival) in the Roll Book,
* reinforce the Attendance Improvement Policy
* record reasons for absence or lateness,
* use Absence Slips as provided for all absences
* follow up any unexplained absences,
* let the Principal know of any unresolved concerns

To encourage attendance teachers will strive to;
* provide a safe learning environment,
* have an interesting and relevant teaching and learning program,
* discourage lateness and absences for trivial reasons,
* encourage lateness over non-attendance (ie wake up late and still come to school),

One Administration SSO is responsible for Roll Books:
This person will:
* enter absence data into EDSAS,
* analyse absence and lateness data and follow up any concerns with the Principal,
* ensure that completed and signed rolls are stored for audit purposes,
* produce a class absence printout at the end of each term for Class Teachers and Principal to check and sign

The Principal is responsible for monitoring attendance across the school:
This means that the Principal will:
* promote the importance of attendance by developing the CBPS Student Attendance Statement and distributing it to the school community on a periodic basis including on enrolment
* analyse absence and lateness records, focusing on patterns of absence, prolonged absences, number of late days, etc.,
* keep the school community informed of the "big picture" in regards to whole school trends,
* assist teachers in following up unresolved concerns about a child's attendance,
* challenge parents/caregivers of poor attenders or frequent late attenders,
* frequently remind parents/caregivers of the importance of notes explaining absences and lateness,
* in consultation with the teacher and Student Counsellor refer to a DECS Attendance Counsellor on an ED 71 form if attendance issues are not resolved.
Principals have delegated authority from the Minister to approve applications for temporary exemption from school attendance for periods of up to one calendar month. Parents/caregivers should apply in writing (form available from class teachers or office) and principals should also advise approvals and non-approvals on school letterhead. Copies of such advices are to be retained in school files, together with applications, and are to be made available to appropriate department officers as required.

All applicants for temporary exemptions exceeding one calendar month, and for permanent exemptions, are to be set out on Form ED 175 (available from the school office) and forwarded to the Principal.

**Our Attendance Goal**

is that all children attend every day on time

Unexplained absences and lateness should be reduced to less than 1% by the end of 2011.

**Processes**

To maintain an accurate set of data about attendance the following procedures must be followed:

- Class Rolls to be marked every day, using accurate EDSAS codes, as listed in the front of the Roll Books.
- Class Teachers need to check Roll Books daily for unexplained absences from the previous day – these must be followed up with a pink absentee slip being sent home.
- Students who are late (ie after 8:50 am) will report to the Office to have their lateness recorded.
- Lateness must be indicated with a time of arrival – unless a note is received stating otherwise then the code for lateness is an F (usually the reason for lateness is a family issue or problem).
- Roll Books must be forwarded to the Office on Wednesdays and Fridays for the recording of data in EDSAS.
- Class Teachers must check the accuracy of the previous week’s continuum record printout and note any errors or unexplained absences that have since been explained.
- At the end of each term Class Teachers must check the final printout of the roll and sign it.
- School data will be used to keep the whole school community informed about attendance and reporting on how targets are being achieved.
- Class Teachers and, if necessary, the Principal must follow up any patterns of absence/lateness, continuing high levels of absence/lateness and unusual absence/lateness incidents.
- All staff to use the Student Absence Flowchart